



Attendance Policy

Review frequency:	Every 3 Years
Last reviewed:	Oct 21
Agreed by Governors	Nov 21
Next review date:	Oct 24

Introduction:

Children are entitled to a full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have.

At Trevithick Learning Academy, we are committed to providing a full educational experience to all of our pupils. We believe that there is a relationship between the attendance of pupils and their development, attainment and progress, therefore if pupils are to benefit from education, then good attendance and punctuality is crucial.

Aims:

It is the aim of the school to create an ethos that encourages attendance and discourages absence or lateness. We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

Legislation and Guidance:

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#) (and [2010](#), [2011](#), [2013](#), [2016](#) amendments)
- [The EduReports concerns about attendance to the headteacher \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

Roles and Responsibilities:

The **Headteacher** (along with the Deputy and Assistant Head) is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at school
- Monitoring school level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Issuing fixed penalty notices where necessary

The **Attendance Officer** will:

- Monitor attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Report concerns about attendance to the headteacher
- Arrange calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Advise the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

- Call parents if children are absent and the reason is unknown

The **Governing Board** is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

The **Class teachers** are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct register codes and submitting this information to the school office.

The **School Office staff** are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system and pass absent reasons to the class teachers.

Parents/Carers have a responsibility to ensure their children attend school regularly and punctually.

Strategies for Encouraging and Promoting Attendance:

The most vital part of encouraging good attendance is to ensure that the school is a place to which the children want to attend: that the school is a place where children are treated with respect and feel valued; a place where their needs are recognised and are being addressed; a place where all children can experience success within a rich, relevant and diverse curriculum. As a school, we will:

- Encourage parents to take an active interest in the work of the school and to build/support their child's learning
- Ensure our curriculum is relevant, exciting and that achievement is praised
- Make children aware of the importance of good attendance
- Praise and reward good attendance (stickers, pencils, half termly prizes for 100% attendance)
- Share children's attendance record with parents at our Parents Consultation Evenings and in our annual written school report given in the Spring Term
- Meet parents/carers of children with poor attendance to see what we can do to help

Recording Attendance:

We will keep an attendance register and record all pupils on that register. This attendance register will be taken at the start of each day (before the first session) and again after lunch (at the start of the second session). It will mark whether pupils are present, absent, attending off site or unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances. The morning register will open at 8:45am and will close at 9am, at which time classroom doors will also close. The afternoon register will open at 12:30 (YR), 1:00pm (KS1) and 1:15 (KS2) and will close by 1:30pm at which time all registers will have been submitted.

Lateness and Punctuality:

The Attendance Officer, alongside members of the SLT, will monitor the lateness of pupils as we know that being punctual for school is crucial. Lateness causes disruption to that child's learning and has an impact on the other children in the class. It is paramount therefore that all children arrive at school on time, where they are welcomed at the door by their class teacher or TA. Morning registration closes at 9am. A child that arrives after this time will be marked as 'late' unless the school has previously acknowledged the reason for their late arrival.

Lateness and punctuality is monitored weekly by the Attendance Officer and Senior Leadership Team. If the school identifies a child with persistent late attendance, parents/carers will be contacted to discuss this further. In some cases, parents/carers will be asked to attend a meeting in person.

Unplanned Absence:

Parents/carers must notify the school on the first day of their child's unplanned absence by 9am (or as soon as practically possible.) If the school phone is busy, then a message must be left on the school answering phone detailing the child's name and the reason for their absence. This absence will be marked as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

Following up on Absence:

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, the school will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason, by phone in the first instance. If the school has not been notified of a child's absence and any attempts at contacting parents/carers has been unsuccessful for a period of two days, the Attendance Officer may visit that child at their home address to 'Check in' and ascertain further information regarding the absence.
- Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use

Planned Absence:

Any planned absence, such as attending a medical or dental appointment must be reported to the school office either via phone or in person with as much notice as possible. These absences will be counted as authorised as long as the child's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence.

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence:

Approval for term time planned absence:

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to pupils during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion. The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

Reducing Persistent Absence:

The Attendance Officer, Assistant Head and Family Liaison Officer meet weekly to examine the school's attendance and to identify any children who can be regarded as persistent absentees. The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee. In order to reduce persistent absence, the Attendance Team (as detailed above) will contact parents by phone in the first instance to alert them to their child's absence record. If the absence does not improve after this, a subsequent letter will be sent followed by a meeting in person if required.

Legal Sanctions:

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence and/ or unauthorised late arrival of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age. A penalty notice can be issued when a child has had a minimum of 12 sessions (6 days) or more within any 100 sessions (50 days).

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made within 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice. Please see the relevant legislation, the Education Act 1996 sec.444(1) and 444(1A) for more information. 'If any child of compulsory school age is a registered pupil at a school and fails to attend regularly at the school, his/her parent is guilty of an offence'

Attendance Monitoring:

At TLA the Attendance Officer monitors pupil absence on a daily basis. If a pupil is absent on the first day without any contact from a parent or carer, then the Attendance Officer will phone to ascertain the reason for the absence. Any findings are then reported to a member of SLT in meetings which are held weekly. A child's parent or carer is expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health. The parent or carer is then expected to call the school on each subsequent day that their child is ill. We collect and store attendance data via SIMS and internally use this data to:

- track the attendance of individuals
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absence may be a cause for concern
- Monitor and evaluate those children as being in need of intervention and support

If attendance becomes a concern, the school's Attendance Officer, Family Liaison and the Assistant Head will start proceedings to address those concerns through a meeting with the parents/carers to help ascertain any reasons/problems that may be impacting on the student's attendance in school. If a student has an attendance of less than 90% then parents are sent a letter in the first instance and then invited into school for a meeting, where targets would be set for improving the child's attendance. If the attendance does not show signs of improving then the case will be escalated formally.

In extreme cases the Education Welfare Service can also initiate legal proceedings against parents who have not fulfilled their legal responsibility of getting their child consistently to school. Please see information in the 'Legal Sanctions' section for more details.

Links with other policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy